5.13 VISUAL RESOURCES

This section addresses the visual resources environmental baseline conditions and the potential for the MPP to cause significant impacts on those resources in the project study area. This assessment was conducted in conformance with the CEC Guidelines for preparing visual impact assessments for an AFC as described in Appendix B of Title 20, California Code of Regulations. The CEC guidelines, in turn, comply with the CEQA documentation requirements. The Visual Resources section is subdivided into five general subsections including Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences. Mitigation Measures, Laws, Ordinances, Regulations and Standards (LORS) Compliance, and References.

Before addressing the affected environment, it is important to review the concepts and terminology that comprise a visual resources analysis, as well as the essential project elements to be evaluated.

The visual resources of a given area consist of the landforms, vegetation, water features, and cultural modifications (physical changes caused by human activities) that impart an overall visual impression of the area landscape. A number of factors are considered in the evaluation of a landscape's visual resources and of the potential for one or more visual impacts to occur, including visual quality, viewer sensitivity, landscape visibility, and viewer exposure. Each of these factors is generally expressed as low, moderate, or high as discussed below:

Visual Quality is a measure of the overall impression or appeal of an area as determined by the particular landscape characteristics such as landforms, rockforms, water features and vegetation patterns, as well as associated public values. The attributes of variety, vividness, coherence, uniqueness, harmony, and pattern contribute to the visual quality classifications of indistinctive (low), common (moderate), and distinctive (high). Visual quality is studied as a point of reference to assess whether a given project would appear compatible with the established features of the setting or would contrast noticeably and unfavorably with them. A landscape's ability to accept alteration without diminishment of visual quality (or creation of visual contrast) is often referred to as *Visual Absorption Capability.*

Viewer Sensitivity addresses the level of interest or concern of viewers regarding an area's visual resources and is closely associated with viewers' expectations for the area. Viewer sensitivity reflects the importance placed on a given landscape based on the human perceptions of the intrinsic beauty of the existing landforms, rockforms, water features, vegetation patterns, and even cultural features.

Landscape Visibility describes the accessibility of the landscape to viewers, referring to one's ability to see and perceive the landscape. Landscape visibility can be a function of several interconnected considerations, including proximity to viewing point, degree of discernible detail, seasonal variations (snow, fog, and haze can obscure landscapes), time of day, and

presence or absence of screening features such as landforms, vegetation, and/or built structures.

Viewer Exposure describes the degree to which viewers are exposed to views of the landscape. Viewer exposure considers the number of viewers, the duration of view, the landscape, and the proximity of viewers to the subject landscape. Although a landscape may be highly scenic and have highly scenic qualities, it may be remote, receiving relatively few visitors and, thus, have a low degree of viewer exposure. The same may be true if a subject landscape or project is situated in relatively close proximity to a major road or highway utilized by a substantial number of motorists if the rate of travel speed on the roadway is high and viewing times are brief, or if the landscape is partially screened by vegetation or other features. It is the subject area's proximity to viewers or *distance zone* that is of particular importance in determining viewer exposure. Landscapes are generally subdivided into three or four distance zones based on relative visibility from travel routes or observation points. Distance zones typically include foreground, middleground and background. The actual number of zones and distance assigned to each zone is dependent on the existing terrain characteristics and public policy and is often determined on a project by project basis.

Visual Impact Susceptibility is a concluding assessment as to the degree of probability that a given landscape will demonstrate a noticeable visual impact with project implementation. Visual impact susceptibility is derived from a comparison of existing visual quality, viewer sensitivity, landscape visibility, and viewer exposure.

An *adverse visual impact* occurs within a public view when: (1) an action perceptibly changes existing features of the physical environment so that they no longer appear to be characteristic of the subject locality or region; (2) an action introduces new features to the physical environment that are perceptibly uncharacteristic of the region and/or locale; or (3) aesthetic features of the landscape become less visible (e.g., partially or totally blocked from view) or are removed. Changes that seem uncharacteristic are those that appear out of place, discordant, or distracting. The degree of the visual impact depends upon how noticeable the adverse change may be. The noticeability of a visual impact is a function of project features, context, and viewing conditions (angle of view, distance, and primary viewing directions). The key factors for considerations in determining the degree of visual impacts or Visual Impact Severity are visual contrast, project dominance, and view impairment.

Visual Contrast evaluates a potential project's or activity's consistency with the visual elements of form, line, color, and texture already established in the landscape. Other elements that are considered in evaluating visual contrast include the degree of natural screening by vegetation and landforms, placement of structures relative to existing vegetation and landforms, distance from the point of observation, and relative size or scale. Generally, visual contrast inversely correlates with visual absorption capability.

Project Dominance refers to the project's relationship to other visible landscape components in terms of vertical and horizontal extent. A project's scale and spatial relationship to the existing landscape can be categorized as subordinate, co-dominant, or dominant.

View Impairment refers to the extent to which a project's scale and position results in the blockage of higher quality visual elements by lower quality elements.

Key Observation Points (KOPs) are locations selected to be representative of the most critical locations from which the project will be seen. KOPs are often selected in an effort to evaluate impacts on visual resources with various levels of sensitivity, in different landscape types and terrain, and from various vantages. Typical KOP locations include: (1) along major or significant travel corridors; (2) at key vista points; (3) in proximity to residential uses; and (4) at significant recreation areas.

The MPP will include a power island, switchyard upgrades to the existing Olive switchyard, control and administrative buildings, wet mechanical-draft cooling towers, package boiler, storage tanks, natural gas compressors, and other ancillary facilities. The project also includes pipelines for natural gas supply, water supply and wastewater discharge, site access and parking. Pipelines will connect to existing onsite pipelines.

The MPP will be located on approximately 23 acres of land in the City of Burbank (COB), in Los Angeles County. The nearest highway is Interstate 5 (I-5), approximately 500 feet north of the power plant site. Access to the site is via a site gate on Magnolia Avenue.

Figure 1.3-1 shows the conceptual plant configuration. The most noticeable of the power plant facilities will be the addition of the HRSG 150-foot stack and six cooling exhausts. The latter units replace an existing 48,000 gallon fuel tank. The remaining power plant facilities will range in height from 10 feet to 40 feet. The cooling towers will be the primary sources of visible atmospheric plumes from the generation facility, releasing warm water vapor that will rise into the air and have an elongated, vertical white plume, the size and height of which will be influenced by meteorological conditions. Materials and color of the project structures had not been specified at the time of AFC preparation. However it is assumed that the facilities will be beige and gray to match the existing facility, as illustrated in the photosimulations provided later in this section and in Section 3.0.

The project will connect to the Olive 69 kV Switchyard via a short, on-site, 69 kV underground transmission line across the existing COB site. The Olive Switchyard is connected to the COB Transmission and Distribution (T&D) system. No new offsite transmission facilities will be required.

The water supply, fuel gas, and wastewater discharge pipelines will be buried approximately 4 feet underground and will not have any significant aboveground components.

During construction, temporary onsite laydown and storage areas will be established.

5.13.1 Affected Environment

5.13.1.1 Methodology

Baseline data collection was initiated with a review of existing project documents and relevant publications in order to gain familiarity with the existing landscape setting, visual resource issues of concern, including sensitive land uses adjacent to, or crossed by, project components, and the characteristics of the proposed project and alternatives.

Following a review of available documentation, a field reconnaissance was conducted with agency personnel from the CEC (Knight, 2001). The purpose of the reconnaissance was to identify specific locations of concern for the establishment of Key Observation Points (KOPs). A detailed visual impact analysis was conducted in February 2001. Applicable visual resource management policy was also identified through a review of the COB's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. KOPs for the MPP are listed below:

- Key Observation Point 1. Tujunga Street near Camino de Villas (hillside residential setting)
- Key Observation Point 2. Howard Court near Viewcrest (hillside residential setting)
- Key Observation Point 3. Victory Boulevard at Cypress (industrial setting)
- Key Observation Point 4. Magnolia Bridge Panorama (industrial setting)
- Key Observation Point 5. Olive Avenue above Metrolink Panorama (industrial setting)
- Key Observation Point 6. Interstate 5 (industrial setting).

Following completion of the baseline data review, field reconnaissance, and verification of locations for specific study, field studies were initiated. Field studies consisted of viewing the project landscapes to the extent feasible from public roads and other vantage points to develop an overall assessment of landscape characteristics and the potential for project impacts. During the field studies, detailed analyses were conducted at the six KOPs described above (see Figure 5.13-1). KOPs are generally selected for one or two reasons: (1) the location provides representative views of the landscape along a specific route segment or in a general region of interest; and/or (2) the viewpoint effectively captures the presence or

absence of a potentially significant project impact in that location. KOPs are typically established in locations that provide high visibility to "relatively" large numbers of viewers and/or sensitive viewing locations such as residential areas, recreation areas, and vista points.

A description of the existing landscape characteristics and sensitivity was compiled and included notes on existing visual quality, known viewer sensitivity, landscape visibility, visible evidence of historical and cultural influence and the urban landscape, and potential viewer exposure. The evaluation of viewer exposure also included qualitative notations on potential numbers of viewers, distance zones, and duration of views.

Based on the above factors, an overall visual impact susceptibility rating was determined for each KOP using the guidance presented in Table 5.13-1. As a general guideline, a visual impact susceptibility rating of Low is achieved if two or more of the three contributing factors are rated low. A visual impact susceptibility rating of High is achieved if two or more of the three contributing factors are rated high. A visual impact susceptibility rating of Moderate is achieved for all other combinations of the three contributing factors.

Field Data Sheets of tabulated information that document the detailed field analysis at each KOP are presented at the end of this section.

5.13.1.2 Regional Landscape

The proposed project is located within the COB, in Los Angeles County. The site is located in a highly urbanized area. Interstate I-5 and the MTA tracks are located immediately north of the site, and other industrial sites are located to the east, west and south. The Burbank downtown and nearby office uses are located within ¼-mile northeast and contain numerous structures of similar height and larger visual mass than the proposed power plant.

5.13.1.3 Power Plant Site, Laydown Area, and Transmission Line

The project will be constructed adjacent to the existing COB Power Generating Facility. The MPP will be part of the existing 23-acre power station. The proposed project includes a power island, switchyard upgrades, buildings, cooling towers, storage tanks, gas compressors, onsite underground transmission lines and parking lots. The project does not require offsite pipelines or transmission lines.

The proposed project also includes a temporary offsite equipment laydown area. This area will be located less than 1-mile northwest of the proposed project site on Victory Place along the railroad tracks between Empire Avenue and Maria Street. The area is 2.4 acres and is currently an abandoned, paved parking lot.

Site preparation and construction at the power plant is not expected to result in significant long range visual impacts due to the temporary nature of the construction. Additionally, structures and equipment related to construction activities will be visually subordinate within the context of the existing features surrounding the project site, such as the power plant buildings and urban nature of the surrounding area.

5.13.1.4 Offsite Pipelines

There are no offsite pipelines required by this project.

5.13.2 Environmental Consequences

5.13.2.1 Methodology

As previously described, KOPs were established at locations of particular concern in order to conduct detailed visual analyses. At each KOP, the potentially affected landscape was photographed and the following project impact information was compiled: visual contrast, probable project dominance, potential for view impairment, and visual impact severity.

The photographs were used to construct visual simulations at each KOP. The visual simulations provide a very useful tool in the visual impact analysis. Following the tabulation and analysis of visual data factors, and preparation and review of the visual simulation, a determination of impact significance was made. In all cases the baseline photographs were taken with a lens that is comparable to the human eye -- none of the photographs are either wide angle or telephoto in scope.

5.13.2.2 Impact Significance Criteria

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines identifies the following four circumstances that can lead to a determination of significant visual impact:

1) The project has a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.

2) The project substantially damages scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State Scenic Highway.

3) The project substantially degrades the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.

4) The project creates a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

A fifth circumstance potentially leading to a significant visual impact would be:

5) The project results in an inconsistency with laws, ordinances, regulations, and standards (LORS) applicable to the protection of visual resources.

The fourth criterion above is not of concern for the present project since appropriate lamp shielding is incorporated into the project design and the project is located in an industrial area. The fifth criterion above is addressed in Section 5.13.4 below.

The first three criteria are the focus of the analysis contained in the remainder of the visual resources section and are accommodated in the present methodology through the assessment of a given landscape's visual impact susceptibility and the severity of the visual impact caused by the project.

Visual impact severity is determined through an evaluation of visual contrast, project dominance, and view impairment. In effect, visual impact severity addresses the pertinent project characteristics and their likely effect on the landscape. Based on the above factors, an overall visual impact severity rating was determined for each KOP using the general guidance presented in Table 5.13-2. In the present methodology, a visual impact severity rating of Low is achieved if two or more of the contributing factors are rated low. A visual impact severity rating of High is achieved if two or more of the contributing factors are rated high. A visual impact severity rating of Moderate is achieved for all other combinations of contributing factors.

In the present methodology, the degree of impact significance is set as a function of impact susceptibility and impact severity. The guidance section of Table 5.13-3 illustrates the interrelationship between impact susceptibility and impact severity, leading to the determination of impact significance.

As Table 5.13-3 shows, a visual impact is considered significant if the impact severity rating is high and has an associated impact susceptibility rating of moderate or high. Second tier impacts occur when impact severity is: (1) rated high and has an associated impact susceptibility rating of low, or (2) rated moderate with associated impact susceptibility ratings of moderate or high. Such second tier impacts are considered adverse but not significant, meaning that the impact is considered negative, but it does not exceed environmental thresholds for significance as described here. Third tier impacts occur when impact severity is: (1) rated moderate with an associated impact susceptibility rating of low, or (2) rated low with associated impact susceptibility ratings of low, moderate, or high. Third tier impacts are generally insignificant and while they may or may not be perceptible, they are considered minor in the context of existing landscape characteristics and viewing opportunities.

Implicit in this rating methodology is the acknowledgement that, for a visual impact to be considered significant, two conditions must exist: 1) the existing landscape must be of high quality and be highly valued by the public; and 2) the perceived incompatibility of one or more proposed project elements or characteristics must tend toward the high extreme, leading to a substantial reduction in visual quality.

5.13.2.3 Construction Impacts

5.13.2.3.1 MPP, Construction Laydown Area, Interconnection Supply Pipeline, Wastewater Discharge Pipeline, and Access Road. Short-term construction impacts on visual resources would result from the temporary presence of equipment, materials, and workforce at the power plant site, construction laydown area, and access roads. Vehicles, heavy equipment, facility components, and workers would be visible during demolition and grading of construction site, during construction of the actual facilities, and during site cleanup.

The transmission line route, water supply pipeline route, and wastewater discharge pipeline, are internal to the site and connect to existing pipelines. The access road is also existing. These project components would not be visible and no significant visual impacts would occur.

5.13.2.3.2 Fuel Gas Supply Pipeline. The fuel gas supply pipeline is internal to the site and connects to an existing pipeline. As such, it would not result in a long-term landscape change following site grading.

5.13.2.4 Operations Impacts

The following discussion of project impacts focuses on long-term visual impacts resulting from project operation and the presence of aboveground built facilities in the existing landscape.

5.13.2.4.1 Power Plant, Plumes, Transmission Line, and Access Road. The following section discusses the MPP as it will be seen from the various KOPs during standard daytime conditions when the plumes will not be visible. The issue of plume visibility is discussed at the end of the section.

Key Observation Point 1 - Tujunga Street Near Camino De Villas (Hillside Residential Setting). Figure 5.13-3A presents the existing view from the upper heights of Tujunga. This KOP is representative of roughly 60 homes in the area and the glimpsed view from some of the adjacent streets when viewing southwest toward the project area. Figure 5.13-3B presents the same view with the proposed power plant photo simulated

adjacent to the existing plant. The only easily discernable difference is the additional HRSG stack just to the right of the existing stack in the middle right of the photograph.

The MPP, given its proposed location in an urbanized industrial area of Burbank, will not modify the existing landforms, vegetation or general visual pattern of the area. This is true because the forms of the new plant are similar to the existing adjacent power plant and other industrial buildings in the area. These forms do not generate any visual contrast with respect to form, line, color or textures. Also when viewed from this angle looking down to the valley floor the higher elements including the stack do not silhouette the skyline or other dissimilar landscape elements.

The impact, although the neighborhood had been designated as "high" on the sensitivity scale, is determined to be insignificant because of the low visibility and the distance from the site resulting in a low impact severity. This process is formally identified in the worksheets and summarized on Table 5.13-3.

Key Observation Point 2 - Howard Court Near Viewcrest (Hillside Residential Setting). Figure 5.13-4A presents the existing view from the upper area along Viewcrest at Howard Court. The view toward the existing COB facility is south and 2.14 miles distant. This view is representative of approximately 40 houses in the area, but almost no public streets since the view is blocked by the existing houses and associated landscaping. Figure 5.13-3B shows the MPP added in by photo simulation. From this distance, it is exceedingly difficult to differentiate the proposed plant, as it is so similar to the adjacent urban structures. Figure 5.13-4B presents the same view with the proposed MPP photo simulated adjacent to the existing COB plant. The only discernable difference is the additional HRSG stack just to the right of the existing stack in the middle right of the photograph at the left of the small bush on the right hill.

As with KOP 1 these forms do not generate any visual contrast with respect to form, line, color or textures. When viewed from this angle down to the valley floor, the higher elements including the stack do not silhouette the skyline or other dissimilar landscape elements. Though the viewers are designated as "high' on the sensitivity scale, the distance and almost invisibility of the plant result in low impact severity. The result is that the visual impact is classified as insignificant. (See also worksheet #2 for more details.)

Key Observation Point 3 - Victory Boulevard at Cypress (Industrial Setting). Figure 5.13-5A presents the existing view from the intersection of Victory Boulevard and Cypress Street. This view is representative of the view that southbound travelers would see. According to COB statistics there are approximately 13,900 southbound vehicles a day in this area. The existing COB facility is to the left about 1,100 feet distant. The immediate foreground includes numerous single and two-story buildings, signs, and street trees that

obscure all but the highest elements of the proposed project. In fact, the only visible component of the existing COB plant is the 150-foot high HRSG stack.

Figure 5.13-5B presents the same view with the proposed MPP photo simulated adjacent to the existing COB plant. The only discernable difference is the additional HRSG stack to the left of the street tree in the middle left of the photograph.

While the additional HRSG stack is visible, it is seen within a context of vertical poles, signs and trees. The view sensitivity for the area was rated low, given the existing industrial character and the limited visibility of the new facility components. The resulting impact is classified as insignificant. (See worksheet 3 for more details.)

Key Observation Point 4 - Magnolia Bridge Panorama (Industrial Setting). Figure 5.13-6A presents the existing view from the high point of the Magnolia Boulevard Bridge as it passes over I-5 and the MTA/Union Pacific rail lines. The existing COB facility can be clearly seen in the middle of the photograph. The main distinguishing features are the generator platform structure and the HRSG stack. The backdrop hills contain Griffith Park and the Forrest Lawn Cemetery on their lower slopes.

Figure 5.13-6B presents the photo simulation addition of the MPP in front of the existing COB facility. Some of the cooling towers and the large 48,000-gallon fuel storage tank are removed to make way for the new structures. The foreground parking lot (for MTA) and the industrial buildings in the middle ground remain unchanged. The view is facing south averaging 750 feet from the new stack. It will be seen for about 10 seconds by the occupants of the approximately 13,600 vehicles that pass by.

The major visible change is the addition of the new HRSG stack, which breaks the skyline of the backdrop hills. The rest of the plant features are similar to the existing structures or the structures that they replace. Once the MPP is in place, it is doubtful that vehicle occupants will notice the change with the possible exception of the new stack. This is true because the new plant has the same characteristics of form, line, color and texture as adjacent structure. The susceptibility of these drivers was rated “low” since they are passing through an industrial district. However, with the stack projecting into the skyline, the impact severity was rated moderate. The net result per Table 5.13-3 is that the overall impacts for this KOP are rated insignificant.

Key Observation Point 5 - Olive Avenue Bridge Panorama (Industrial Setting). Figure 5.13-7A presents the existing view from the high point of the Olive Avenue Bridge as it passes over I-5 and the MTA/Union Pacific rail lines. The existing COB facility can be clearly seen to the left and right of the pedestrian access to the MTA station. The main

distinguishing features are the generator platform structure and the HRSG stack. In this view the backdrop hills in the area of the proposed project are not significant.

Figure 5.13-7B presents the photo simulation addition of the MPP in front and to the right of the existing COB facility. Some of the cooling towers and the large 48,000-gallon fuel storage tank are removed to make way for the new structures. The roof of the nearby industrial buildings in the middle ground remain unchanged. The view is facing southwest averaging 1300 feet from the new stack. It will be seen by the occupants of approximately 13,900 vehicles for about 10 seconds.

The major visible change is the addition of the new HRSG stack, which breaks the skyline. The rest of the MPP plant features are similar to the existing structures or the structures that they replace. From this view the scale of the new buildings will be more dominant and are seen against the sky adjacent to the new stack. While it is doubtful that most vehicle occupants will notice the change after the new plant is constructed, the new profile of the buildings and the stack rate a determination of "moderate" impact severity. This is true because the new plant has the same characteristics of form, line, color and texture as adjacent structures . The susceptibility of these drivers was rated "moderate" since Olive Avenue is directly connecting two commercial districts and is less industrial than Magnolia Boulevard. The net result per Table 5.13-3 is that the overall are defined as "adverse but not significant".

Key Observation Point 6 - Interstate 5 (Industrial Setting). Figure 5.13-8A presents the existing view from the high point of the I-5 overpass as it crosses over Verdugo Street. The higher portions of existing COB facility can be seen in the middle of the photograph. The Olive Avenue Bridge is at the right of the photograph. The main distinguishing features are the generator platform structure and the HRSG stack. The I-5 border is dominated by a relatively dense screen of trees, which obscure most of the adjacent urban area to the left.

Figure 5.13-8B presents the photo simulation addition of the MPP to the right of the existing COB facility. Given the dense screening, only the new stack is visible. The view is facing the freeway (west) and is approximately a ½-mile from the new stack. It will be seen by the occupants of approximately 108,000 vehicles for approximately 3 to 5 seconds in several glimpses.

The major visible change is the addition of the new HRSG stack which breaks the skyline but is always seen within the context of the even taller trees adjacent to the freeway -- in this case near the first palm tree.

The susceptibility of these drivers was rated "low" since they are driving at relatively high speeds in an area with a heavy volume of vehicles. The impact severity was rated low since

the new plant is almost invisible and can be seen only very briefly. The net result per Table 5.13-3 is that the overall impacts for this KOP are rated insignificant.

Visible Plumes. The potential exists for vapor plumes (water vapor condensation from the exhaust) to be vented from the stacks and cooling tower. The frequency, persistence, and size of visible condensate plumes depends primarily on the design and type of combustion turbine generator, heat recovery steam generator, and cooling tower, as well as meteorological conditions of temperature and humidity. While vapor plumes usually tend to dissipate quickly, the plume of water vapor (steam) rising from the cooling towers could project upward as much as 65 meters (approximately 152 feet above the 50-foot-high cooling towers) during a No Fog Day at the 5 percent category. This figure is based upon a SACTI computer model for the cooling towers under Burbank meteorological conditions. The height figure for a No Fog Day at the 50 percent category is 41 meters (127 feet). No modeling is available for the HRSG stack. In all cases, any new plumes generated will be seen within the context of the existing plumes from the adjacent Olive Avenue Plant. Thus while the vapor output may be twice as large as the current case, the visual impacts will not double since there will already be plumes at the plant location. In fact, from some locations, where the vapor plumes are in tandem with the existing plant, there will be no change from the existing visual condition.

Worst case conditions typically occur during the months of November through March, the winter rain period. Thus, plume visibility would likely be minimal during this time period. During the rest of the period when conditions are favorable for vapor plume formation, the length of time under which plumes may occur is limited to short periods on any particular day.

When the plume is visible, the apparent form, color, and texture of the vapor plume would tend to replicate the visual characteristics of naturally-occurring atmospheric features including cumulus, cirrus, and stratus cloud forms, haze, smog and fog.

5.13.2.4.2 Offsite Pipelines. There are no required offsite pipelines.

5.13.2.5 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts to visual resources would occur where aboveground facilities or evidence of underground facilities (e.g. cleared ROWs) occupy the same field of view as other built facilities or impacted landscapes. It is also possible that a cumulative impact could occur if a viewer's perception is that the general visual quality of an area is diminished by the proliferation of visible structures. The significance of the cumulative impact would depend on the degree to which (1) the viewshed is altered; (2) visual access to scenic resources is impaired; (3) scenic character is diminished; or (4) the project's visual contrast is increased.

TABLE 5.13-1

VISUAL IMPACT SUSCEPTIBILITY

KOP	Visual Quality	Viewer Sensitivity	Viewer Exposure	Visual Impact Susceptibility
KOP 1	Moderate	High	Low	Moderate
KOP 2	Moderate	High	Low	Moderate
KOP 3	Low	Low	Low	Low
KOP 4	Low	Low	Moderate	Low
KOP 5	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
KOP 6	Moderate	Low	Low	Low

Notes: General Guidance for Determining Visual Impact Susceptibility

Rating	Guidance
Low	Two or more of the contributing factors are rated Low.
High	Two or more of the contributing factors are rated High.
Moderate	All other combinations of contributing factors.

TABLE 5.13-2

VISUAL IMPACT SEVERITY

KOP	Visual Contrast	Project Dominance	View Impairment	Visual Impact Severity
KOP 1	Low	Low	Low	Low
KOP 2	Low	Low	Low	Low
KOP 3	Low	Low	Low	Low
KOP4	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
KOP 5	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
KOP 6	Low	Low	Low	Low

Notes: General Guidance for Determining Visual Impact Severity for Table 5.13-2:

Rating	Guidance
Low	Two or more of the contributing factors are rated Low.
High	Two or more of the contributing factors are rated High.
Moderate	All other combinations of contributing factors.

TABLE 5.13-3

IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE BY KEY OBSERVATION POINT

Impact Susceptibility	Impact Severity		
	Low	**Moderate**	**High**
Low	Insignificant[1] (KOPs 3 & 6)	Insignificant (KOP 4)	Adverse But Not Significant[2]
Moderate	Insignificant (KOPs 1 & 2)	Adverse But Not Significant (KOP 5)	Significant[3]
High	Insignificant	Adverse But Not Significant	Significant

[1] Insignificant impacts may or may not be perceptible but are considered minor in the context of existing landscape characteristics and view opportunity.
[2] Adverse but Not Significant Impacts are perceived as negative but do not exceed environmental thresholds.
[3] Significant impacts can be mitigated to a level that is not significant or can be avoided altogether with feasible mitigation. Without mitigation, the impact could exceed environmental thresholds.

Notes: General Guidance for Determination of Impact Significance for Table 5.13-3:

Impact Susceptibility	Impact Severity		
	Low	**Moderate**	**High**
Low	Insignificant[1]	Insignificant	Adverse But Not Significant[2]
Moderate	Insignificant	Adverse But Not Significant	Significant[3]
High	Insignificant	Adverse But Not Significant	Significant

[1] Characteristics and view opportunity.
[2] Adverse but Not Significant Impacts are perceived as negative but do not exceed environmental thresholds.
[3] Significant impacts can be mitigated to a level that is not significant or can be avoided altogether with feasible mitigation. Without mitigation, the impact could exceed environmental thresholds.

In order to evaluate the cumulative visual impacts, the list of cumulative structures supplied by the COB was reviewed. Of those on the list only two were deemed to have height that might intersect the backdrop hills or skyline and therefore have the potential to generate a cumulative impact when added to the MPP.

These structures were:

- Marriott Residence Inn, 321 South First Street at Verdugo Avenue - 253-room full service extended stay hotel with restaurant and convention space (10-15 stories)

- La Dolce Vita Senior Artists Colony, 400-422 South San Fernando Blvd & 208-264 ¾ East Verdugo Avenue - 147-unit senior housing project (5-7 stories)

As can be seen from the citations, both of these structures have the potential to project more than 80 to 100 feet in height. They both are within a 1-mile radius of the proposed MPP.

Applying the criteria identified above, it is determined that there are no cumulative visual impacts. This is true because

1) These structures are not close enough to alter the viewshed from any of the KOPs. The only KOPs where these structures might be seen within a total context are #1 and #2. However, from this distance, these new structures will be almost imperceptible on the valley floor.

2) None of the structures will be seen adjacent to the HRSG stack or in tandem enough to cumulatively impair access to a scenic visual resource.

3) The scenic character of central Burbank is not diminished since it is already urbanized.

4) The projects do not increase the visual contrast of the MPP project when compared to other adjacent visual elements in the area.

5.13.3 Mitigation Measures

Although no significant visual resource impacts are anticipated to occur, the following are general mitigation measures that will be incorporated into the project design for the MPP to minimize visual resource impacts associated with the construction and operation of the power plant addition.

VIS-1: All project facilities, including structures, buildings, fencing and signs, will be painted with neutral earth-tone tan or gray colors that will blend with existing facilities and the background of existing vegetation as shown in the photo-simulation in Figure 5.13-6B as an example. A specific painting plan will be developed for CEC approval to ensure that the proposed colors do not unduly contrast with the surrounding landscape colors. All treatments will be in non-reflective colors. The painting plan will be submitted sufficiently early to ensure that any pre-colored buildings, structures and linear facilities will have colors approved and included in bid specifications for such buildings or structures.

VIS-2: Except as required by security and worker safety requirements, night lighting will be hooded to direct illumination downward and inward toward the areas to be illuminated in order to minimize nighttime light and glare, backscatter to the nighttime sky, and visibility of lighting to public viewing areas. A specific lighting plan consistent with operational and safety needs will be submitted to the CEC for approval. The plan will include provisions for timed and/or motion detection-controlled switches, with the 150-foot tall stack to be illuminated only as necessary to meet FAA or other safety requirements.

VIS-3: A specific landscaping plan will be prepared showing the location of proposed landscaping, the varieties and sizes of plants to be planted, and the proposed time of maturity for each species.

With implementation of the above applicant-committed mitigation measures, no significant unavoidable adverse impacts to visual resources are anticipated from the proposed project.

5.13.4 LORS Compliance

This section briefly discusses how the proposed project complies with all identified LORS that affect the visual analysis as outlined below. Table 5.13-4 provides a summary of the LORS and the administering agency for each.

5.13.4.1 Federal

The proposed project is located on local public lands and is thus not subject to federal land management requirements.

5.13.4.2 State

There are no applicable state LORS which apply to the MPP. CEQA requirements are discussed in Section 5.13.2.2.

TABLE 5.13-4

LORS APPLICABLE TO VISUAL RESOURCES

LORS	Applicability	Conformance (section)
Federal		
There are no applicable federal LORS.		
State		
There are no applicable state LORS.		
Local		
City of Burbank General Plan		
Land Use Policies	Building height limited to maximum 70 feet	Section 5.13.4.2
	Architectural design compatible with surrounding properties	Section 5.13.4.2
	Industrial activities separated from conflicting land uses	Section 5.13.4.2
Industrial Land Use Policies.	Encourage and promote landscaping	Section 5.13.4.2
South San Fernando Redevelopment Project.		
(501) General	Eliminate and prevent recurrence of blight and improve the economic base of the Project Area	Section 5.13.4.2
	Construction in Project Area shall comply with all applicable State and local laws in addition to applicable City codes	Section 5.13.4.2
(613) Open Space and Landscaping	Landscaping shall be developed in the Project Area to ensure optimum use of living plant material	Section 5.13.4.2
(616) Utilities	The Agency shall require that all utilities be placed underground whenever physically possible and economically feasible.	Section 5.13.4.2
(620) Design for Development	Within limits, restrictions and controls established in this Plan, and subject to the provisions of Sections 601 and 609 herein, the Agency is authorized to establish heights of buildings, land coverage, setback requirements, parking requirements, design criteria, traffic circulation, traffic access, and other development and design controls necessary for proper	Section 5.13.4.2
City of Burbank Municipal Code.		
Sec. 31-812	Structure Height	Section 5.13.4.2
	Setbacks	Section 5.13.4.2
	Landscaping	Section 5.13.4.2

TABLE 5.13-4

(CONTINUED)

LORS	Applicability	Conformance (section)
Local - City of Burbank Municipal Code (continued)		
Sec. 31-813 Development Review	Unless specifically exempted by section 31-1915 of this code, no structure shall be erected in a M-2 zone, nor shall any permits related thereto be issued until an application for Development Review has been submitted to and approved by the Director, as provided in Division 2, Article 19 of this chapter. These permits include but are not limited to site preparation permits such as demolition permits and grading permits.	Section 5.13.4.2
Sec. 31-1113.1 Commercial and Industrial Design Standards	(a) Roof Design	Section 5.13.4.2
	(c) Building Materials – facades visible to public must be designed, treated and finished in a manner compatible with other visible sides of building	Section 5.13.4.2
	(d) Variation on Plane – building elevations fronting public streets or residentially zoned lots shall contain elements designed for purpose of providing visual variation including expressed floor or surface breaks, balconies, projections, recesses, awnings, and horizontal setbacks.	Section 5.13.4.2
Section 31-1114 Art in Public Places	Construction and installation for the lifetime of a development project, a work or works of art on the project site or the payment of an in lieu fee or an exemption from these requirements for a public project	Section 5.13.4.2

5.13.4.3 Local

City of Burbank General Plan. The COB's General Plan does not specifically reference the existing COB facility with respect to visual resources. However, the City has identified four policies that relate to the development in general. They are as follows:

Land Use Policies.

- Building height is limited to an absolute maximum of 70 feet, even with a CUP, except in the City Centre Redevelopment Project area, the Golden State Redevelopment Project area, the Media District, and other areas for which there is a specific plan.

  The Applicant has applied for a CUP in accordance with the requirement for building height, as components of the project will exceed 70 feet.

- New development shall have architectural design that is compatible with surrounding properties and which enhances the appearance of Burbank.

  The Applicant will work with the City to ensure compatible design components such as paint color.

- Industrial activities shall be separated from conflicting land uses.

  The MPP is adjacent to the existing COB facility on the south and warehousing to the north-northeast. These are compatible uses.

Industrial Land Use Policies.

- Encourage and promote the landscaping of industrial sites and the aesthetic design of industrial buildings in order to improve the appearance of the industrial areas, and the City as a whole, thereby contributing to the positive image of Burbank.

  The Applicant will work with the City to ensure that colors and landscaping provided is adequate and aesthetically pleasing.

South San Fernando Redevelopment Project. The MPP will be located within the boundaries of the South San Fernando Redevelopment Project area. Per Ruth Davidson-Guerra (February 2001) at the COB, this redevelopment area does not have any specific requirements that pertain to this project. All projects in this area must be reviewed by the

Redevelopment Agency on a case by case basis. The MPP will be subject to review by the Agency.

While the South San Fernando Redevelopment Project Area Redevelopment Plan does not include design guidelines, development standards, or performance criteria, policies do exist which identify the need for cohesive and aesthetically pleasing architectural standards. The following policies illustrate this:

> *Section V (500) Redevelopment Action*
>
> *(501) Genera*
>
> *The Agency proposes to eliminate and prevent the recurrence of blight, and improve the economic base of the Project Area by:*
>
> *Adopting specific design guidelines for projects to ensure a consistent design theme which will guide rehabilitation, new development, developers, architects, and builders.*
>
> *(609) General Controls and Limitations*
>
> *(610) New Construction*
>
> *All construction in the Project Area shall comply with all applicable State and local laws in effect from time to time. In addition to applicable City codes, ordinances, or other requirements governing development in the Project Area, additional specific performance and development standards may be adopted by the Agency to control and direct improvement activities in the Project Area.*
>
> *(613) Open Space and Landscaping*
>
> *Landscaping shall be developed in the Project Area to ensure optimum use of living plant material in conformance with the standards of the City.*
>
> *(616) Utilities*
>
> *The Agency shall require that all utilities be placed underground whenever physically possible and economically feasible.*

(620) Design for Development

Within the limits, restrictions and controls established in this Plan, and subject to the provisions of Sections 601 and 609 herein, the Agency is authorized to establish heights of buildings, land coverage, setback requirements, parking requirements, design criteria, traffic circulation, traffic access, and other development and design controls necessary for proper development of both public and private areas within the Project Area……One of the objectives of this Plan is to create an attractive and pleasant environment in the Project Area. Therefore, such plans shall give consideration to good design , open space and other amenities to enhance the aesthetic quality of the Project Area. The Agency shall not approve any plans that do not comply with this Plan except as permitted by Section 619 of this Plan.

The status of compliance with this section is unclear at this time, as the City does have the right to exempt itself from these requirements. The Applicant will work with the COB to ensure that the MPP is consistent with the goals and policies of the Redevelopment Plan for the South San Fernando Redevelopment Project.

City of Burbank Municipal Code. The project is zoned M2, Industrial Zone. The City's municipal code sets forth the following requirements that are applicable to this zone.

Sec. 31-812

(a) Structure Height

(1) The maximum height of a structure shall be determined by its distance from the closest lot line of any property zoned for residential use as follows:

(vii) Greater than 500 feet (located in an adopted specific planning or redevelopment planning area). Maximum height limit to be determined through the conditional use permit.

(3) CUP required for structure higher than 35 feet.

The Applicant has applied for a CUP in accordance with the requirement for building height, as components of the project will exceed 35 feet.

(c) Yards

(2) Setbacks

(a) All structures, including semi-subterranean garages, but excluding above-grade-parking structures, shall be set back at least five feet from the front lot line or 20% of the building height, whichever is greater; this setback requirement may be averaged. Such setback shall be required for that portion of a building that is within 20 feet above grade and shall be calculated for the length of the building frontage only. Portions of buildings over 20 feet in height may extend over required front yard setbacks, except in areas where required trees are planted.

The project as designed has setbacks of 140 feet on Magnolia and 420 feet on Olive and therefore complies.

(3) Landscaping

(a) A minimum of 50% of front and exposed side yards shall be landscaped.

(e) In required front and exposed side yards, a minimum of one tree shall be planted for every forty linear feet of street frontage or fraction thereof. Turf is allowed in up to 50% of required landscaped areas. In shrub areas, a minimum of one five-gallon shrub is required for every ten square feet of shrub area.

Since the new structure replaces existing structures and are setback in the site of a minimum of 140 feet, the application of their requirement will be negotiated with the City.

Sec. 31-813 Development Review

Unless specifically exempted by section 31-1915 of this code, no structure shall be erected in a M-2 zone, nor shall any permits related thereto be issued until an application for Development Review has been submitted to and approved by the Director, as provided in Division 2, Article 19 of this chapter. These permits include but are not limited to site preparation permits such as demolition permits and grading permits.

Applicant has applied for Development Review.

Sec. 31-1113.1 Commercial and Industrial Design Standards

(a) Roof Design

(3) All roof mounted equipment shall be screened from view through the use of architectural screening systems which are visually integrated into building design with respect to color, material and form.

The power plant does not have "roof mounted" structures as identified by this paragraph. The development review process, already applied for, will address the general intent of this section.

(c) Building Materials

All facades visible to the public and surrounding neighbors must be designed, treated and finished in a manner compatible with the other visible sides of the building.

The project complies.

(d) Variation on Plane

All building elevations fronting public streets or residentially zoned lots shall contain elements designed for the purpose of providing visual variation including expressed floor or surface breaks, balconies, projections, recesses, awnings, and horizontal setbacks.

The project complies with the general intent though the project does not have a conventional building character as expressed above. The development review process, already applied for, will address the intent of this section.

Section 31-1114 Art in Public Places

The zoning ordinance allows for the construction and installation for the lifetime of a development project, a work or works of art on the project site or the payment of an in lieu fee or an exemption from these requirements for a public project. The MPP will comply with this ordinance using the most appropriate mechanism as determined by the COB.

5.13.5 References

The following list contains references used in the performance and development of methodologies used in the assessment of visual resources for the MPP.

California Energy Commission. 1997. Siting Regulations: Rules of Practice and Procedure and Power Plant Site Certification Regulations.

City of Burbank. 1988. General Plan.

ND. Municipal Code Chapter 31.
ND. South San Fernando Redevelopment Plan.

Davidson-Guerra, Ruth. 2001. City of Burbank Redevelopment Division. Personal Communication with C. Ewing-Rodrigues.

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Smardon, Richard C., James F. Palmer, and John P. Felleman, eds. 1986. *Foundations for Visual Project Analysis*. John Wiley & Sons, New York, NY.

USDA, Forest Service. 1995. *Landscape Aesthetics, A Handbook for Scenery Management*. Agriculture Handbook Number 701. USDA, Forest Service.

1975. *National Forest Landscape Management.* Volume 2, Chapter 2, Utilities. USDA.

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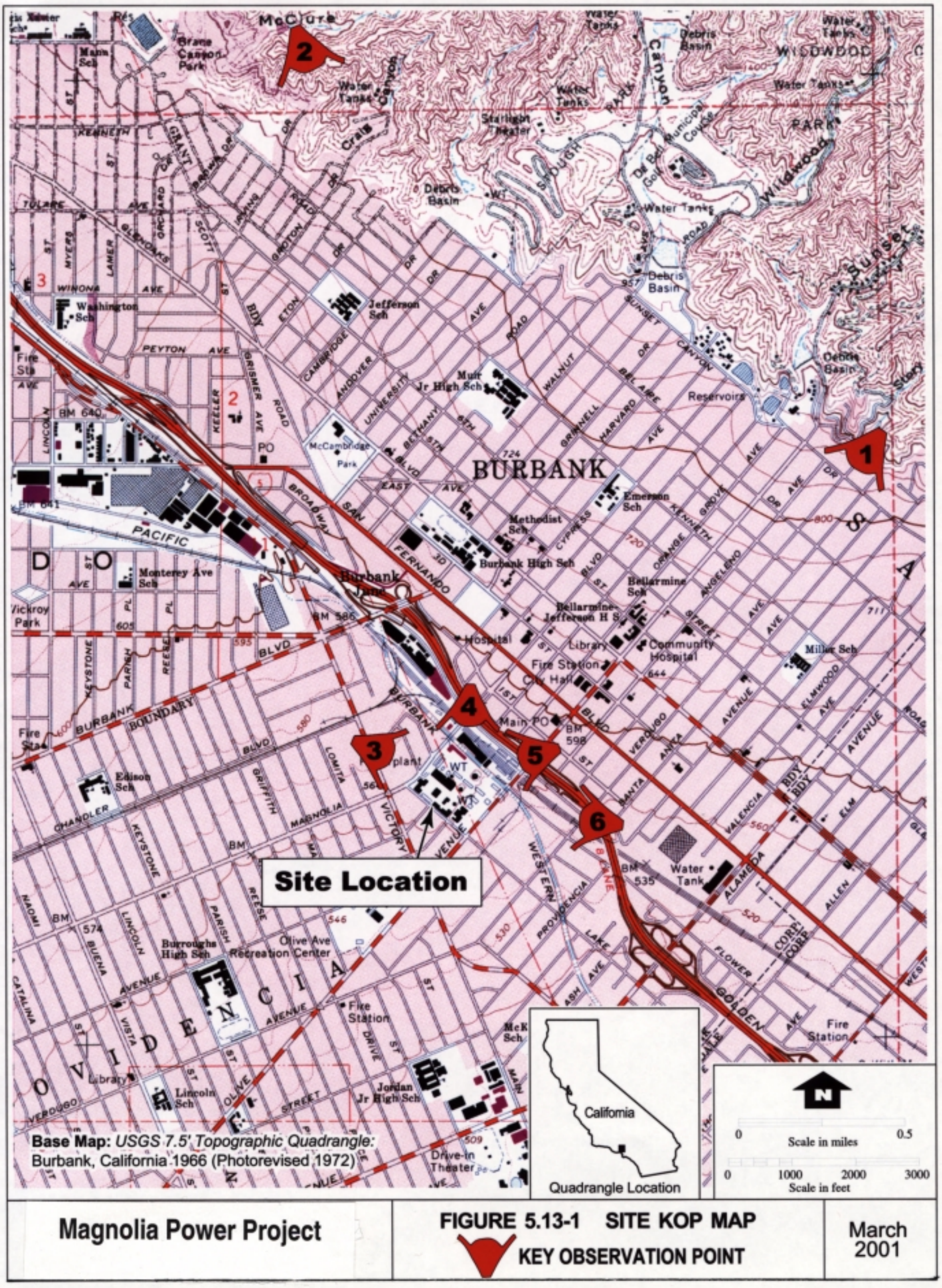
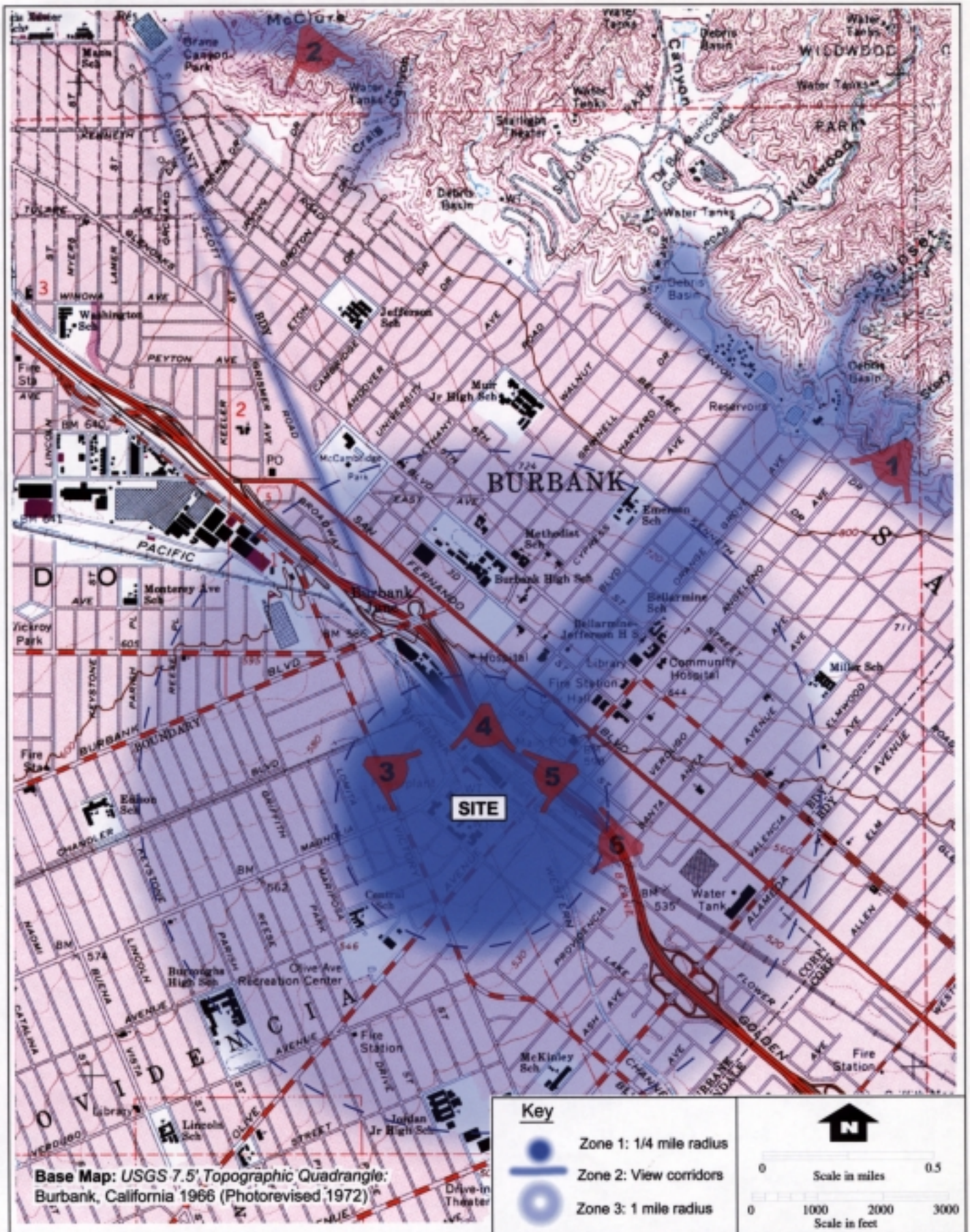
U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management. 1986. *Visual Resource Inventory Manual*. USDI, BLM.

1986. Visual Resource Contrast Rating Manual. USDI, BLM.

1984. Visual Resource Management Manual. USDI, BLM.



Magnolia Power Project	FIGURE 5.13-1 SITE KOP MAP KEY OBSERVATION POINT	March 2001



Magnolia Power Project

FIGURE 5.13-2 VIEW SHED AREAS

March 2001

A The existing view from KOP 1.

B The same view showing a photo simulation of the proposed project.

Magnolia Power Project	**FIGURE 5.13-3** **Key Observation Point 1**	March 2001

VISUAL ANALYSIS DATA SHEET

KEY OBSERVATION POINT DESCRIPTION

KEY OBSERVATION POINT NO.
1
PROJECT COMPONENT
Power Plant
LOCATION
Tujunga, near Camino de Villas. Residential neighborhood viewing South West.
ANALYST
Andrew G. Merriam
DATE
02/21/01

VISUAL QUALITY

	Low	Panoramic views across the urbanized San Fernando Valley - City of Burbank fore and middle-ground. The context is urban with tree-lined residential in the foreground and the downtown area middle-ground, industrial area just behind downtown.
X	**Moderate**	
	High	

VISUAL ABSORPTION CAPABILITY

Slope: Low - Valley floor is flat - no natural obstructions to the view.

Surface Cover: High - The adjacent area is urbanized with many buildings of similar architectural mass.

Reclamation Potential: Moderate - New structures can be painted to blend with existing urban character.

VIEWER SENSITIVITY

Viewer expectations from this neighborhood will be high from the individual residences. The view from public streets is limited. Viewer sensitivity is classified as High.

VIEWER EXPOSURE

Visibility: Low - due to adjacent structures.	**Duration of View:** Extended.
Distance From Project: 1.55 miles.	**Overall Viewer Exposure:** Low - due to distance from project.
Number of Viewers: 601 residences.	

VISUAL IMPACT SUSCEPTIBILITY

	Low	The high visual absorption capacity of the adjacent urbanization and relative distance is offset by the high viewer sensitivity and long exposure. The visual impact susceptibility moderate.
X	**Moderate**	
	High	

(over)

Key Viewpoint No. 1
(continued)

VISUAL CONTRAST RATING

CHARACTERISTIC LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

	LAND/WATER BODY	VEGETATION	STRUCTURES
FORM	Well defined on a clear day.	Minimal in affected area (urban landscape).	Pervasive - dominant on valley floor.
LINE	Angular on horizon. Angular foreground.	Indistinct.	Angular in urban area.
COLOR	Green or golden, muted by haze or smog.	Green	Tans, whites, creams, dark windows.
TEXTURE	Angular / foreground and background.	Indistinct.	Varied.

PROPOSED ACTIVITY AREA DESCRIPTION

	LAND/WATER BODY	VEGETATION	STRUCTURES
FORM	Indistinct.	Same.	Multiple - retalinear.
LINE	Flat.	Indistinct.	Angular to indistinct.
COLOR	Not visible.	Varied greens.	Same as above.
TEXTURE	Not visible.	Indistinct.	Same as above.

DEGREE OF CONTRAST

	LAND/WATER BODY				VEGETATION				STRUCTURES			
	NONE	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH	NONE	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH	NONE	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
FORM	✓				✓					✓ Stack		
LINE	✓				✓				✓	✓ Plume		
COLOR	✓				✓				✓		✓ Plume	
TEXTURE	✓				✓				✓			

TERM: (Long) Short

CONTRAST SUMMARY: None (Low) Moderate High

PROJECT DOMINANCE

Subordinate ✓ Co-Dominant Dominant

VIEW IMPAIRMENT

None ✓ Low Moderate High

VISUAL IMPACT SEVERITY

Low ✓ Moderate High